MINISTER FOR HEALTH
MINISTER FOR ALCOHOL REHABILITATION

SERIOUS MONEY FOR ALCOHOL MANDATORY TREATMENT

14 May, 2013

The Northern Territory’s landmark Alcohol Mandatory Treatment reforms will be bolstered with a $10 million capital commitment on top of the $35 million already provided for services in Budget 2013.

Health and Alcohol Rehabilitation Minister, Robyn Lambley, said the Government has committed more than $100 million over the next three years to fund secure alcohol mandatory treatment centres across the Territory.

“The Government is serious about providing alcohol rehabilitation for problem Territory drinkers and we have allocated serious money to make it work,” Mrs Lambley said.

“Under the Government’s plan, anybody placed in Police Protective Custody three times in two months could face up to 12 weeks of alcohol mandatory treatment in one of the four secure rehabilitation centres.

“Up to 800 problem drinkers every year will be required to undertake alcohol mandatory treatment, which will provide problem drinkers with a treatment pathway and give meaning to the thousands of protective custodies in the Territory every year.

“During its initial phase, the Short Term Patient Accommodation facility at Royal Darwin Hospital will be fitted-out to meet the demands of alcohol mandatory treatment.

“The Venndale facility near Katherine and the CAAAPU service in Alice Springs will each receive funding from the $10 million capital pool as well as operational funds to provide additional capacity.

“There is also scope for Government support to non-secure rehabilitation facilities and I have been in discussions with Tiwi Islands Traditional Owners and the operators of BRADAAG in Central Australia about the role they can play in supporting alcohol mandatory treatment.”

A component of the $35 million funding allocation will also be used to establish the Alcohol Mandatory Treatment Tribunal, which will make orders for mandatory treatment.

“The Alcohol Mandatory Treatment Tribunal will be an independent legal body that makes decisions about the best treatment options for problem drinkers,” Mrs Lambley said.

“The Tribunal will be made up of lawyers, health professionals and community representatives and be empowered to make a mandatory treatment order, recommend another treatment option or make an income management order.

“Expressions of interest for the Tribunal will be sought next month.”

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